5th March 1954]

(c) whether the cause of death was duly investigated; and

(d) the result of the investigation and the action taken thereon?

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" (a) to (c) Yes.
" (d) A full statement [a] is placed on the table of the House."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, many incidents of suicide in lock-ups have figured in questions in this Assembly and in all such cases the Government were content with the report of their officers. Here in this case the first thing the officials did was to call all the pressmen and explain to them how the man in the lock-up committed suicide. May I ask, it is not guilty conscience that prompted the Police officials to take this step and as a matter of fact, the man died as a result of injuries inflicted upon him while he was in the lock-up? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Sir, the hon. Member is entitled to come to his own conclusions. We have made the best endeavour possible to arrive at the truth and we have placed the full facts before the House. Unusually, I have put the whole thing on paper and put it before the House because I know the repeated habit of hon. Members to question everything of this kind. Unfortunate things do happen in the world but one need not always make a presumption against the officers who are trying to do their best according to their lights and discharge the duties allotted to them. The hon. Member referred to 'guilty conscience.' That is not the case here. The Police are aware that there are hon. Members who question these things. Therefore, they took the line they have taken."

Aaron Spinning and Weaving Mills, Limited.

* 54 Q.—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries and Labour be pleased to state whether the Government have any proposal to reopen and start working of the Aaron Spinning and Weaving Mills, Limited, Pappinisseri, North Malabar?

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" No, Sir."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to state whether the Government have taken cognisance of the fact that the Mill has been closed with effect from 12th January 1954 and representations have been made to the Government with regard to the arrears of salary and other rights to which the workers are entitled and if so what action was taken by the Government in the matter? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" Sir, the Government are aware of the fact that the Mills have closed down and they have also received letters that arrears of salary have not

---

[a] Printed as Appendix on page 584 infra.

[5th March 1954

been paid to the workers. We are asking the Commissioner of Labour to investigate the matter and report to Government."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" In view of the fact that about 1,400 labourers have been thrown out of employment and having regard to the serious repurcussions it may have on the social and economic conditions of the day, may I know why the Government are not interesting themselves in such an important matter? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" Sir, the hon. Member is aware that the closure of the Mill was not due to any action of Government. The hon. Member is also aware of the fact that this is a private company and therefore Government at this stage cannot do anything more than what they have done so far."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Are the Government aware, Sir, that there was a dispute between the management and labour and the mill has been closed down? If so, was it not the duty of Government to interfere in the matter and see that justice was done to the workers and the management penalised? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" Sir, as I have already said, we have asked the Commissioner of Labour to investigate the matter and report to Government. As soon as the report is received the Government will act."

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" Sir, may I know when the report about the closure was received by the Government and when the Government asked the Commissioner of Labour to investigate the matter and when they expect to receive the report from the Commissioner? "

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" Sir, the mill closed down on the 12th January 1954. Much time has not been lost since then. I am unable at the present moment to say when we asked the Commissioner to investigate and report. If the hon. Member puts a separate question, I will answer it."

10-20 a.m. SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Sir, textile industry is included among the essential services. Moreover, there are industrial disputes concerning this factory pending before the Conciliation Officer as well as before the Industrial Tribunal. There is also the Industrial Disputes Amending Act passed by the Central Government. May I know from the Hon. Minister for Labour whether the act of the management in closing the factory without any notice is not an open violation of the Industrial Disputes Act and the Factories Act? Representations have been made to the Government about this matter so many times. What action are the Government going to take against the management for openly

5th March 1954]

flouting the Industrial Disputes Act? Under Section 33 of the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Act, will they declare closure of the factory illegal and take action against the management?

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" This aspect is controlled by the judgment of Courts which have said that closure for loss is justified. Whether there has been a loss in this case is a matter for examination. That is why I said that the Government were looking into the matter and would take necessary action on receipt of the Labour Commissioner's report."

SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI :—" Is it the standard of the Government that if a workshop with more than one thousand employees is closed down, two months is quite a short period of time for the Commissioner of Labour to report and cannot the Hon. Minister do anything to expedite the disposal of this matter? What is the difficulty in getting this question tested in a Court of law by prosecuting the management? Have the Government examined whether this Company closed down because of losses sustained by it? Lastly, I would like to know whether, in the opinion of the Government, the increased tax on cloth woven by mills is likely to facilitate the re-opening of this factory?"

MR. SPEAKER :—" The hon. Member is cross-examining the Hon. Minister."

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" The hon. Member has put three questions. The last question relates to a matter of policy and I cannot give an opinion at the present moment on the taxation policy of the Central and the State Governments. I am sure the hon. Member will raise this question during the budget discussion and my Hon. Colleague the Finance Minister will answer."

SRI K. T. SREEDHARAN :—" Is it a fact that this Government has recommended to the Central Government to grant a loan of ten lakhs of rupees to the Aaron Spinning and Weaving Mills, Limited, so as to enable the re-opening of this factory?"

THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" This Government have not made any such representation. But there is nothing to prevent the management from raising a loan in the open market, and we wish them good luck."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" The Hon. Minister said that the Government came to know about the closure of this factory in January. Is it not a fact that on 14th November 1953, the President of the Workers' Union of the Aaron Spinning and Weaving Mills (Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar, M.L.A.), submitted to the Hon. Minister a memorandum describing the position of the mills and pointing out the possibility of its closure? It was also stated in the memorandum that the management owed to the workers about Rs. 4 to 5 lakhs, and that other parties might remove

[5th March 1954

even the movables of the concern after the closure. What action have the Government taken in the matter? ''

The Hon. Dr. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' I am afraid the contention of the hon. Member is rather surprising. His suggestion is that the Government should take action in respect of any private concern on the report of a labour leader that the mill is likely to close down and that the workers are likely to lose their jobs. I suggest in all fairness that the mill must close down before any action can be taken by the Government. The mill involved in this particular case is a private mill. There is nothing to prevent the management from floating a loan in the open market and re-starting the mill.''

Sri T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—'' On a point of personal explanation, Sir. To see that they get their wages, the workers resorted to picketing against the removal of the articles belonging to the mill. Not only did the Government not help the workers, but they sent their Police, arrested the workers who picketed and removed them to Police stations.''

The Hon. Dr. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' I am not aware of these facts. I think the question of allegation against the Police must be addressed to some other Hon. Colleague in the Cabinet.''

Sri K. P. GOPALAN :—'' When the management owes to the workers more than two lakhs of rupees as arrears of wages, is it not an open violation of the Payment of Wages Act? May I know from the Hon. Minister for Labour what action he is going to take to give relief for the 1,300 unemployed workers? ''

The Hon. Dr. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' I am sure the workers have legal remedies in the matter of recovering their wages, apart from Government interference. So far as the opening of gruel centres is concerned, the question must be addressed to the Hon. Revenue Minister.''

Mr. SPEAKER :—'' It has become more a cross-examination than a question. I pass on to the next question.''

Shoranur Metal Industries, Limited.

* 55 *Q.*—Sri M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries and Labour be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received any proposals from the Board of Directors of the Shoranur Metal Industries, Limited, Malabar, regarding the reopening of the factory; and

(*b*) if so, whether any decision has been taken thereon?

The Hon. Dr. U. KRISHNA RAO :—'' (*a*) & (*b*) No, Sir. The Government have, however, received a scheme for the reopening of the factory from Sri C. P. Karunakara Menon and three others and it is under their consideration.''